



YOUTH SINGS

AND OTHER POEMS

MARIAN E. WILDMAN

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## YOUTH SINGS

There is not much in my youth's bright years,  
Dancing with laughter, a-shimmer with tears,  
That I have known;  
No grandeur of passion, or heartbreak of death,  
Only the dusk and the dawn-wind's breath,  
These are my own.

Only the fragrance of fresh turned loam,  
Smile of a comrade, and lights of home,  
Sun on the sea;  
Butterfly touch of a baby's hand,  
Dawn of the spring in an ice-bound land,  
These are for me.

These are the lyrics my heart has heard—  
Wind in the poplars, call of a bird,  
Flutter of wing.  
Lest hurrying years should still my refrain,  
Woven with petals and cadenced with rain,  
Youth's song I sing!

## OCTOBER

Grey, grey skies where the wind is,  
Wet, brown roads where the rain is,  
Lost in the shadowy mist;  
Clean-washed rowan on hillsides,  
Scarlet as jewels on hillsides  
Of silver and amethyst.

O, to be swift as the rain is!  
O, to be free as the wind is  
To follow the roadways of mist!  
I would go forth to the hillsides,  
Rain-silvered slopes of the hillsides,  
And there with the rowan keep tryst!

## RAIN

Wet jade the grass  
That bends and bends again  
Beneath the silver sandals, shining sandals  
Of the rain.

Wet gold the leaves  
Of poplars on the plain  
With fingers twined in veilings, misty veilings  
Of the rain.

## HAVEN

Over the marshlands, night,—  
Deep in the night, a star;  
And, golden, your window light  
Shining afar.

They say there are men who fight  
For gold or for fame . . . How still  
Is the star—how bright  
Your lamp on the sill!

## HOPE

She may have forgotten me—  
Forgotten the tears and laughter of our days,—  
But she will not forget the quiet ways  
Of springtime wood and lea.  
She will come still to find the first wind-flowers,  
Pale in the dusk of beech trees, gnarled and old,  
To find new leaflets pricking through the mould,  
As in the olden hours.  
She will return  
To hear again the sentient forest hush  
Threaded with silver madrigal of thrush  
Deep hid in banks of fern.  
These will she not forget . . .  
And this my solace,—when spring flowers blow  
Down woodland ways, there softly will I go  
And find her yet!

## ACCEPTANCE

I am content  
That I shall come to death with dimming eyes,  
And ears that catch no more the clear refrain  
Of vagrant robins calling through the rain.  
Were it not so, the dear, warm earth that lies  
About me, under wide-flung sweep of skies,  
Would surely hold me fast! I should repent—  
Even on Death's dim threshold, I should turn  
Remembering how red the roses burn  
In gardens all a-drowse with perfumes blent.  
A myriad earth-loves  
Would halt my soul, were it not blind and numb:  
The petalled froth of early blossomed plum  
Flung like dim snow in dusk of springtime groves,  
Would bind my heart in frail, unyielding chains;  
The sweet, insistent murmur of spring rains,  
The meadows breathing gold with daffodils,  
The morning mists curled faintly on the hills—  
All these would hold me captive. Better so,  
That blinded, deaf, unheeding I must go,  
Regretting not with Death to rest me there,  
And—earth forgotten—thus find Heaven fair.

## PARTENZA

I shall go forth on some still night of stars,  
Laughing aloud at bars!  
The autumn wind, the crispéd leaves, and I  
In one mad, joyous motley all shall fly  
Down lanes of dusk, blown free,—forever free!  
The birches that I love will catch at me  
With wistful, holding fingers, and the rose,  
Withering on her stalk, her life shall close  
In one last burst of perfume as I pass;  
The curling grass  
Will quiver at my touch . . . Yet ever high  
Ablaze in unguessed reaches of the sky,  
The whirling stars will call me on and on—  
Past hill and town—  
Under the window where my dear Love lies  
With slumber pressed dream-deep upon her eyes,  
(Here I shall pause to break a spray of vine,  
Gemmed with remembering tears,—a seal to hold her mine,  
A sign to hint the way that I shall go—  
And bind it in her lattice,—she will know.)  
Then onward, like a wind-blown flame of light,  
Forth on the undreamed pathways of the night!



